

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING MARY YERGAN HUGHES

HON. DWIGHT EVANS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2018

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an inspirational and dedicated woman from Northwest Philadelphia, Mary Yergan Hughes, a children's librarian and volunteer.

Mrs. Hughes was born in Alice, South Africa to missionary parents. Her father was an advocate for black civil rights in Africa. She later moved to Massachusetts and enrolled in Northfield Mount Hermon, a preparatory school, in which she served as the president of the student council and was one of a few African American students in her school. For college, she was part of the first group of African American women to attend Wellesley College. After her junior year, she contracted tuberculosis and had to leave school in order to recover. After three years of recovery, she finished her undergraduate degree at Columbia University.

She married Dr. Hughes and had two daughters. Mrs. Hughes went back to school and received her master's degree in library science from Drexel University which led her to become a children's librarian in Philadelphia's Northwest Regional Library. She loved reading to the neighborhood children during after-school story hours and inspired so many children to have a love for learning and reading.

Ever since Mrs. Hughes became an adult, she would volunteer. She was a Platinum Alumna member of the Philadelphia chapter of the Links, Inc., a service organization of distinguished women whose goal is to enrich and sustain the culture of African Americans and others of African ancestry. She was also a president during one of its National Assemblies. Some other organizations she was president of include: the Philadelphia chapter of the Circle-Lets, Inc., a social organization for black women, and Boulé wives, the women's arm of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity.

Mrs. Hughes was part of our Philadelphia community in many ways. She was a member of the Germantown Cricket Club where she loved to participate in tournaments. She loved to play tennis. She was also a half-century member and elder at Summit Presbyterian Church in Mount Airy.

Mrs. Hughes devoted her life to engaging and helping her community. The 2nd Congressional District of Pennsylvania extends gratitude to Mrs. Hughes for all that she has done for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

HONORING GARRETT JACKSON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2018

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Garrett Jackson.

Garrett is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 60, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Garrett has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Garrett has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Garrett has become a member of the tribe Mic-O-Say. Garrett has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Garrett for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America, and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING WARDELL GRAY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 16, 2018

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable person, Mr. Wardell Gray.

Wardell Gray was born June 30, 1917 as the eldest son and first of two sons of Mr. Will Gray and Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Otis Gray in Carson, Mississippi. There was an older sister, Willa Mae, the first born who died of lockjaw at the age of 10. The year he was born, his father was a Foreman with the Illinois Central Railroad, and they lived for a number of years in Sumrall, MS where his parents operated a boarding house for the other men who worked under his father. Gray was exposed to hard work in the area of farming and business at an early age. Upon their return to Jefferson Davis County, his mother was the teacher in a one room school house on the grounds of the Holliday Creek M.B. Church.

Due to the fact that there was no school for blacks, he completed 8th Grade education there and continued his high school education at Prentiss Institute Junior College. He was a good student and an awesome athlete as a Baseball Pitcher with one of the Old Negro Leagues. His father Will Gray passed away at the age of 110 years of age and his mother Mary at age 97.

Gray was drafted in the U.S. Army on November 19, 1941 and fought in World War II in the following battles and campaigns: Naples-Foggia, Rome Arno, Rhineland, and Central Europe. He received the American Defense Service Medal, ATO Medal, Good Condition Medal, Meritorious Unit Award and the World War II Victory Medal. He returned back to his home from the Army on October 31, 1945.

While away at War, his parents were acquiring land. Upon his return, his dream was to do the same and continue his love for farming. In completing this vision, he met and married the

love of his life, Quillie Ross Gray. She was a graduate of Jackson State University and continued out of state at Indiana University to obtain a master's degree. He was one of the first blacks to open a Dairy during the late 40s. His Uncle, Dr. J.R. Otis was President of Alcorn College. With this relationship to the college, students who were Agriculture majors would travel to Gray Farms to intern.

As a civil rights activist, Gray was involved in fighting for voter registration, and an avid and ardent supporter of the 1964 Civil Rights act. In 1959, he was the first black candidate to run for any type of public office; Constable for his district, Beat 2. He would later run for Election Commissioner. He became President of the Jefferson Davis Chapter of NAACP in 1959 and would remain through 1974. He picketed local stores and other national franchises regarding employment discrimination practices. Gray worked tirelessly with other civil rights giants such as Medgar and Charles Evers, Fannie Lou Hamer, Rev. Darby, Dr. Aaron Henry, his cousin, Charles Young and many others known and unknown.

As a member of Blackmon Temple CME Church, Gray brought his love of God, education, and children together, for it was during the civil rights movement that meetings of the NAACP, Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, Mississippi Action for Progress (MAP) were held at churches throughout the State. He along with Mr. N.J. Booth was instrumental in acquiring the land for the first black school in Jefferson Davis County, Carver High.

Wardell Gray and his family suffered many attacks in his life, cross burnings, a barn burned to the ground with 3,000 bales of hay destroyed and on and on, but it did not stop him from fighting for civil rights. He partnered with the Lawrence County Branch of the NAACP to ensure the hiring of African Americans at St. Regis Paper Company (Now Georgia Pacific).

His wife was fired from the school system briefly due to Rev. Darby and Gray filing the lawsuit against the poll tax for the right to vote. Gray formed biracial committees to tackle the troubles in the county—such as colored and white separate waiting rooms at medical clinics.

When the NAACP was sued for millions of dollars, he was in the forefront of fund raising to assist the National Branch in meeting their need. He was the first black to be appointed under President Jimmy Carter to serve on the ASC Committee.

Volumes could be written about the number of people Gray counseled, inspired, encouraged and helped along in their lives. Gray will be remembered as a gentleman, friend, and servant; lover of his family, community and his God.

The loves of his life were his two children and his grand- and great-grandchildren. He was a mentor to many children in the community and beyond. Gray leaves to cherish his memory his children: Dr. Pene' Gray Woods (Curtis) of Cordova, TN; Joseph Willie (Sheryl) Gray of Hattiesburg, MS, grandchildren Christopher (Lynsi), and Dominic, Joseph Jr., Jayla,

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